

## Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02

INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 IO-10 OMB-01 AID-05 /083 W

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P 220735Z MAY 75

FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 211

INFO AMEMBASSY DACCA

AMEMBASSX KABUL

AMCONSUL KARACHI

AMCONSUL LAHORE

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L ISLAMABAD 4617

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PGOV, PFOR, PK, IN

SUBJECT: PEOPLES PARTY WINS AZAD KASHMIR ELECTIONS

REF: ISLAMABAD 4353

SUMMARY: ACCORDING TO PRELIMINARY REPORTS OF AZAD KASHMIR ELECTIONS MAY 18, AZAD KASHMIR PEOPLES' PARTY (AKVP) WON SMALL BUT DECISIVE MAJORITY OF SEATS IN AK LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY. IN PRESIDENTIAL RACE, SARDAR MOHAMMAD IBRAHIM (REPRESENTING AKPP-DOMINATED FOUR PARTY ALLIANCE) GAINED EASY VICTORY OVER FORMER AK PRESIDENT SARDAR QAYYUM. THE ELECTION OF BHUTTO'S PARTYMEN WILL PERMIT HIM TO EXTEND AND CONSOLIDATE HIS CONTROL OVER AZAD KASHMIR, HITHERTO THE LAST HOLDOUT AGAINST PPP PREDOMINANCE. IT WILL ALSO LESSEN THE POTENTIAL FOR EMBARRASSING AK OPPOSITION TO ANY EVENTUAL MOVES ON BHUTTO'S PART TO CHANGE THE CONSTITUTIONAL RELATIONSHIP OF THE AREA TO PAKISTAN OR, IN THE STILL UNFORESEEABLE FUTURE, TO A DECISION BY THE GOP TO ACCEPT AS A

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PERMANENT BOUNDARY THE PRESENT LINE OF CONTROL IN

KASHMIR. END SUMMARY.

1. ACCORDING TO PRELIMINARY (AND UNOFFICIAL) REPORTS OF AZAD KASHMIR ELECTIONS MAY 18, AZAD KASHMIR PEOPLES' PARTY (AKPP) WON SMALL BUT DECISIVE MAJORITY OF SEATS IN AK LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY. IN PRESIDENTIAL RACE, SARDAR MOHAMMAD IBRAHIM (REPRESENTING FOUR PARTY ALLIANCE, INCLUDING AKPP) GAINED EASY VICTORY OVER SARDAR ABDUL QAYYUM, WHO HAD SEVERAL DAYS EARLIER CALLED FOR BOYCOTT OF POLLS. (NO CLEAR READING YET AVAILABLE OF DEGREE OF VOTER PARTICIPATION OR MARGIN IN INDIVIDUAL CONTESTS.) ACCORDING TO PRESS REPORTS MAY 20, 40 ASSEMBLY SEATS FULLED AS FOLLOWS: ALLIANCE WON 36 OF WHICH AKPP WON 22, LIBERATION LEAGUE 5, MUSLIM CONFERENCE (MC) -- IBRAHIM GROUP 4, AZAD MUSLIM CONFERENCE 3; IN OPPOSITION, MC (QAYYUM'S GROUP) WON 3 AND INDEPENDENTS 3. (TWO SEATS RESERVED FOR WOMEN WILL BE FILLED BY VOTE OF DIRECTLY ELECTED ASSEMBLY MEN.) RESULTS REPRESENT SIGNIFICANT POLITICAL VICTORY FOR PAKISTAN PRIME MINISTER BHUTTO AND ABDS AZAD KASHMIR TO LIST OF AREAS (NWFP, BALUCHISTAN) IN WHICH HIS PEOPLE'S PARTY, OF LITTLE CONSEQUENCE WHEN HE CAME TO NATIONAL POWER THREE AND A HALF YEARS AGO, HAS SUBSEQUENTLY EMERGED AS KEY POLITICAL POWER.

2. ALTHOUGH AKPP NOW HAS THE VOTES NECESSARY TO FORM A GOVERNMENT OF ITS OWN (PARTY PRESIDENT HAMID KHAN IS APPARENT FRONT RUNNER FOR STATE PRIME MINISTER SLOT), IT MAY CHOOSE, OR BE DIRECTED BY BHUTTO TO CHOOSE TO INCLUDE OTHER ALLIANCE PARTIES IN A COALITION GOVERNMENT. SHOULD IT GO IT ALONE, THERE IS GOOD LIKEHOOD THAT ITS SLENDER MAJORITY WILL BE INCREASED BY DEFLECTIONS FROM ITS ALLIANCE PARTNERS AND INDEPENDENTS IN THE ACCEPTED SOUTH ASIAN PATTERN. AKPP WILL IN ANY EVENT PLAY DOMINANT ROLE IN SELECTION BY AK LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF AK REPS ON JOINT PAK/AK COUNCIL, BODY CREATED UNDER 1974 STATE CONSTITUTION TO EXERCISE POWERS RESERVED IN CASE OF PROVINCES OF PAKISTAN PROPER TO FEDERAL GOVERNMENT.

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3. VICTORY OF SARDAR IBRAHIM AND ALLIANCE WAS DOUBTLESS HELPED BY OVERTHROW OF QAYYUM IN APRIL AND THE CONSEQUENT PASSING OF LOCAL ADMINISTRATIVE POWER INTO THE HANDS OF HIS OPPONENTS. CAMPAIGN ERUPTED INTO SOME VIOLENCE DURING PAST MONTH AND QAYYUM CLAIMED (APPARENTLY WITH MUCH JUSTIFICATION) THAT HE AND HIS PARTY MEN WERE HARRASSED AND OBSTRUCTED FROM CAMPAIGNING IN AZAD KASHMIR. ADDITIONALLY, IT WAS PATENTLY CLEAR TO PAK

AND AK PUBLIC THAT GOP ACTIVELY SUPPORTED THE ALLIANCE. FOR EXAMPLEN THE ALLIANCE "WHITE PAPERZ VILIFYING QAYYUM RECEIVED GENEROUS COVERAGE IN GOVERNMENT-CONTROLLED MEDIA WHILE QAYYUM'S STATEMENTS WENT LARGELY UNREPORTED. SENSING THAT ALL THE CARDS WERE STACKED AGAINST HIM, QAYYUM ON MAY 16 CALLED FOR BOYCOTT OF ELECTIONS. ALLIANCE LEADERS ARE CLAIMING 70 PER CENT OF ELECTORATE VOTED (VERSUS 30 PER CENT IN 1970) WHICH COULD MEAN EITHER THAT CALL FOR BOYCOTT WENT UNHEARD OR UNHEEDED OR THAT BALLOT BOXES WERE STUFFED BY OVERZEALOUS ALLIANCE SUPPORTERS.

4. SOME LOCAL AK OBSERVERS FEEL THAT ELECTORATE IN THIS BACKWARD STATE VOTED FOR IBRAHIM AND AKPP-DOMINATED ALLIANCE IN THE BELIEF THAT THEIR ELECTION WAS THE BEST GUARANTEE OF CONTINUED GOP GOOD WILL AND ECONOMIC LARGESSEM LOCAL ISSUES, WHICH INVARIABLY ALSO PLAY AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN SUCH ELECTIONS, REMAIN DIFFICULT TO ANALYZE IN THE ABSENCE OF A MORE COMPLETE BREAK-DOWN OF VOTING PATTERNS.

5. WHATEVER THE ELEMENTS THAT PRODUCED THE OUTCOME, IT IS CLEAR THAT THE EFFECT OF THE ELECTION IS TO EXTEND AND CONSOLIDATE BHUTTO'S CONTROL OVER AZAD KASHMIR, HITHERTO THE LAST HOLDOUT AGAINST PPP PREDOMINANCE. WE EXPECT THAT THE PAK LU  
E MINISTER  
WILL HANDPICK THE NEW AK GOVERNMENT LEADERS WITH A VIEW TO REMOVING IRRITANTS IN A-GOP RELATIONS (SUCH AS EXTENT OF GOP CONTROL OVER AK ADMINISTRATION) AND THAT AK LAWS WILL BE BROUGHT INTO CONFORMITY WITH THOSE IN PAKISTAN (SUCH AS THE CRIMINAL CODE AND TAX SYSTEM). THE ELECTION RESULTS WILL ALSO LESSEN THE  
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POTENTIAL FOR EMBARRASSING AK OPPOSITION TO ANY EVENTUAL MOVES ON BHUTTO'S PART TO CHANGE THE CONSTITUTIONAL RELATIONSHIP OF THE AREA TO PAKISTAN OR, IN THE STILL UNFORESEEABLE FUTURE, TO A DECISION BY THE GOP TO ACCEPT AS A PERMANENT BOUNDARY THE PRESENT LINE OF CONTROL IN KASHMIR.  
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